

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK BOARD OF GRADUATE STUDIES OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 09:30, THURSDAY 09 November 2023, ONLINE VIA TEAMS		
Present	Professor Dan Branch	Chair
	Dr Claire Bastie	Member of academic staff appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Dr Nikola Chmel	Deputy Chair of the Faculty Education Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Professor Kurt De Battista	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Professor Caroline Elliott	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Dr Daniel Franklin	Member of academic staff appointed by the Senate
	Lee Griffin	Deputy Chair
	Karen Jackson	Representative from the Library
	Dr Natasha Khovanova	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Professor David Lambert	Deputy Chair of the Faculty Education Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts
	Professor Graeme MacDonald	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Dr Daniel Matthews	Member of academic staff appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Dr Neil Murray	Member of academic staff appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Professor Davide Nicolini	Co-opted member of academic staff
	Vaishnavi Ravi	Co-opted student member / Postgraduate Officer (Students' Union)
	Holly Roffe	Co-opted student member / Postgraduate Officer (Students' Union)
Professor Mark Steel	Member of academic staff appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine	
Professor Martin Wills	Member of academic staff appointed by the Senate	
Attending	Nicola Ellis-Thomas	Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships)
	Fatima Alhaj Hasan	PGR and Postgraduate Student Development Officer
	Laura Larard	Administrative Officer (Doctoral College) (Assistant Secretary)
	Rhiannon Martyn	Head of Doctoral College (Secretary)
	Stella Neophytou	Postgraduate Student Development Officer
	Louise Sutcliffe	Postgraduate Student Development Officer
	Dr Caroline Biggs	CDT & PG Scholarships Coordination Manager
	Sharon Howard	Postgraduate Research Manager (SCS)
Ref	Item	
001	<p>Welcome and apologies for absence</p> <p>Apologies were received from: Dr Ross Forman, Dr Michele Underwood, Adam Child, Ashleigh Skelhorn, Prof Elizabeth Stanway, Anne Wilson, Rachel Dickinson, Gavin Schwartz-Leeper, Liz Hough, Claire Boyes, Sara Hattersley, Emily Henderson, Nicola Attridge</p>	
002	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>	

003	<p>Terms of reference</p> <p>The terms of reference (paper 003-BGS091123) were approved.</p>
004	<p>Membership of the Board</p> <p>The membership of the Board (paper 004-BGS091123) was received and approved. The Chair welcomed new members.</p>
005	<p>Freedom of Information Act publication scheme</p> <p>It was noted that minutes of the meeting of the Board are published on the University website, as part of its Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p>
006	<p>Nomination of student member on the University Research and Ethics Governance Committee</p> <p>The Chair noted that Yvette Wang has been appointed as the student member of the RGAEC.</p>
007	<p>Minutes of last meeting on 15 June 2023</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2023 (007-BGS091123) were approved. The Chair noted that the September meeting was held as a workshop therefore formal minutes were not taken.</p>
008	<p>Matters arising from last meeting on 15 June 2023</p> <p>(a) Students' Union Update – GTA report (minute 048-BGS150623)</p> <p>The Chair informed members that a working group is currently reviewing the GTA framework. This work (expected to conclude within the 23/24 academic year) covers many of the same issues raised by PGRs through surveys and other forms of feedback.</p>
Chair and Secretary's Update	
009	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p>(a) Funding updates</p> <p>The Chair reported that: the ESRC Midlands Graduate School DTP had successfully been recommissioned with congratulations due in particular to Prof Jon Coaffee and Ashleigh Skelhorn: Warwick has three bids through to the final round of the EPSRC funding call with outcomes due in December; and the AHRC call for bids will open soon but with a much narrower set of themes. It appears that UKRI are shifting toward focussing on CDT/DTPs.</p> <p>The Chancellor's International Scholarship scheme will run following the revised method used last year – this is in part due to unprecedented success in securing 100% awards made to PGRs enrolling. The new addition of Access awards for the CIS awardees most in need of financial support to take up their places at Warwick has been highly successful and will be available again for the 24/25 intake.</p>
010	<p>Deputy Chair's Business</p> <p>(a) Academic Integrity</p> <p>The Deputy Chair made a 'shameless plug' for a week celebrating academic integrity (w/c 20 November).</p>
011	<p>Secretary's Business</p> <p>(a) Staffing update</p> <p>The Doctoral College is currently carrying several vacancies, including in examination administration. The team are coping well and recruitment is underway.</p> <p>(b) PGR extensions</p>

	<p>The Head of the Doctoral College is now reviewing all applications for extensions to registration. Covid is still a significant factor among the reasons for requesting extensions. Department colleagues are asked to ensure that requests are appropriately supported (with documentation) by supervisors and department management to avoid requests being returned.</p> <p>(c) Nomination of Faculty Assessors (Graduate Awards Committee)</p> <p>Faculties will shortly be asked to nominate assessors for the Graduate Awards Committee.</p>
Students' Union Update	
012	<p>Students' Union update</p> <p>The PG Sabbatical Officer reported that: their current priority is the review of GTA contracts; decolonisation advocates have been ; they are contributing to the development of PGT and PGR strategies; and the SU PG Fair was well attended (including p/t and mature students).</p>
Faculty Updates	
013	<p>Arts Faculty update</p> <p>The Deputy Chair of the Arts Faculty Education Committee reported on the uncertainty and concerns resulting from the revised AHRC funding model, including reduced funding, narrowing themes, a preference for CDTs, and disproportionate complexity. Further detail will be released later in November.</p> <p>ACTION: Chair to pick up with Rachel Moseley and other key stakeholders.</p>
014	<p>SEM Faculty update</p> <p>The Deputy Chair of the SEM Faculty Education Committee reported that priorities had been discussed and included themes of staff and student workload and mental health issues, and a lack of research opportunities for early career researchers.</p> <p>The STEM Grand Challenge is holding stage three workshops. The education workstream is going well, but the research workstream is getting stuck on the adjacency of workplaces.</p> <p>The Faculty is adopting a more flexible model for awarding Warwick Industrial and Warwick Collaborative Fellowships which will enable applications to be made at any point in the year.</p>
015	<p>Social Sciences Faculty Update</p> <p>The Chair noted that minutes from the Faculty Education Committee October meeting had been circulated.</p>
PGR SSLC Business	
016	<p>The Doctoral College held a meeting with SSLC Chairs and other representatives earlier in the month, updating attendees on the PRES results and PGR strategy. PGRs raised the issue of examination support – the provision of templates for the thesis, help with preparing for a viva, and the costs of printing a hard copy for depositing in the Library. The Doctoral College is exploring these issues.</p>
Items for approval/discussion	
017	<p>BGS Priorities 23/24</p> <p>The Chair clarified what was meant by the inclusion of 'PGR Strategy' noting that it involved several work packages (supervisor training and support, PGR training, PGR experience (including support for career progression), and recruitment).</p> <p>The Doctoral College will create a web page for the strategy to include a concise summary of the aims and actions.</p>
018	<p>PGR Strategy and supervision</p>

	<p>The Chair highlighted the four main elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory training for new supervisors • Annual department training events for all supervisors • Peer-led communities of practice • Workshops to develop professional practice in key aspects (beginning with pre-admissions advice, and mediation) <p>Members questioned the expected level of engagement from supervisors, including whether or not we are being too cautious. The Chair clarified that supervisors will have the option to engage at a minimal level or increase their engagement according to need and/or interest in their professional development. The new Provost had recently observed that if we make the training good enough people will want to engage. The Chair asked members to indicate if this was not happening.</p> <p>Dr Chmel observed that department training could and should be designed and delivered either across several (smaller) departments and/or at the faculty level to pool resource and share good practice.</p> <p>Prof Nicolini shared that WBS expects supervisors to attend termly events – most supervisors do attend and find it useful.</p>
019	<p>UKRI – New Deal for PG Research: response</p> <p>The Board noted the report.</p>
020	<p>Department Biennial PGR Review</p> <p>The Secretary reported that most departments had completed their reports but a few were not due until the end of the month. The summary (paper 020-BGS091123) will be shared with Faculty Education Committees along with the individual department reports. The Doctoral College will hold its annual meeting with all departments in the Spring term when the PGR experience and department recruitment strategies will be the main topics of discussion.</p> <p>Department colleagues are thanked for their engagement with this process.</p>
021	<p>Postgraduate Research Experience (PRES) 2023 and Student Insight Survey results</p> <p>The Board noted the PRES results, including the high response rate. The Chair observed that the results clearly demonstrate that the PGR experience is increasingly about more than research in its purest sense.</p> <p>K Jackson noted that the Library is reflecting on comments about (non-departmental) space and the longer-term future of the REX.</p>
022	<p>English language testing issues</p> <p>To be deferred to a future meeting, but members should share specific examples of issues with the Chair.</p>
023	<p>Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results 2023</p> <p>The Deputy Chair noted that PTES results do not feed into external metrics. The results indicate a period of stability following the immediate aftermath of Covid. Including an upswing in the satisfaction with the student experience. Timing the survey to ensure optimum engagement alongside picking up the dissertation experience is difficult and the results have to be considered with this in mind.</p>
<i>Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion</i>	
024	<p>ITLR Review Panel Report Cluster 6 Enabling PGRs to thrive</p> <p>The Board received and noted the paper 024-BGS091123.</p>
025	<p>PGR Strategy Progress Report to the Education Committee</p>

	The Board received and noted the paper 025-BGS091123.
026	EngD and PhD submission rates The Board received and noted the paper 026-BGS091123.
027	BGS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group minutes 26 June 2023 The Board received and noted the paper 027-BGS091123.
028	CDT Management Committee minutes 4 July 2023 The Board received and noted the paper 028-BGS091123.
Other	
029	Any other business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Prof Lambert informed the Board that Warwick was not included in the Wolfson Foundation scholarships competition this year, and that this was only discovered by accident. b) Prof Niccolini observed that the September BGS workshop-style event was very useful as an opportunity to share experiences (particularly between Directors of Graduate Studies). The Chair committed to a minimum of one annual meeting in this style.
Next meeting: 09:30, THURSDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2024, VENUE TBC	